Depot Town Rag

MEETINGS
Depot Town Merchants' Committee
Thursday, February 10, 7:30 pm
Depot Town Association
Thursday, February 17, 7:30pm
Depot Town Foundation
Thursday, February 24, 8:00pm
all in the caboose.

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

WE'RE IN TRAINING

There was a day when people saw the railroad as a detriment, a negative attribute in the neighborhood. Such terms as "the other side of the tracks" made it clear that there was a bad side to be on...and we were on it.Depot Town survived such negativism and turned it around. All is different today. When rail travel nostalgia leads people to collect iron that the railroads used to throw away. We've always been among those who wave at cabooses --and that custom prevails today. A tour of the district proves that nearly everyone does something to show their attitudes to all that track out there. Just look at the rail-oriented memorabiliea seen on a tour of our block this month:

Model trains in the window of the TREASURE SHOP. Plaster models of antique engines at the J & J PLASTERCRAFT SHOP. Children's books about trains at ...AND EVERYTHING NICE. Railcar photos, along with a spectacular model train in tramp art style above the kitchen at the SIDETRACK. Photos of the original MCRR depot are featured at AUBREE'S SALOON. The flat front sign at DEPOT EXCHANGE carries out the old gold-on-black railroad signage tradition. The very logo and name of DEPOT MAILBOXES capitalizes on our theme. FARMERS'MARKET has its share: the enormous scales, the loading dock, etc. are not decoration items, but left over from the days when it was truly the Freight House. TAKE FIVE COFFEE SHOP features collected items, including signs, paintings and switches from the industry. Notice the insulators on display in the windows, too. Apparently we missed some when we were kids. The steamer trunk in the TREASURE SHOP could be a great window display item in the block. Can't you see merchandise pouring out all its drawers?

Ypsilanti Commercial Loan Program

deadline: 5 pm, March 18, 1983

Low interest loans made available for commercial improvements with the primary emphasis on facade upgrading. Energy conservation and code improvements are also eligible cost under the program.

Applicants will be required to secure financing for 50% of the project costs. This financing will be available from City approved participating banks at a rate of no more than 1% above prime. Participating bank financing may be set at either a fixed or adjustable rate as negotiated between the lending institution and applicant. The City will match the financing secured by the applicant with a low interst loan at a fixed rate of 5%. The City will provide a minimum loan match of $15,000. Consequently, the minimum amount for a City/Bank combined loan will be $5,000. Partcipating banks have the option of issuing combined City/Bank loans larger than $30,000, by the City's maximum low interest loan award will remain at $15,000. One loan with the blended interest rate charged by the participating bank and the City will be issued to the program applicant. Program applicants have the option of matching City low interest rate financing with funds secured through their own resources.

The City will not be liable for costs incurred by business persons in developing site plans.

NOTE: Program applicants may appeal the program guideline which set the City matching minimum loan amount at $3,500, before the Commercial Loan Review Board.

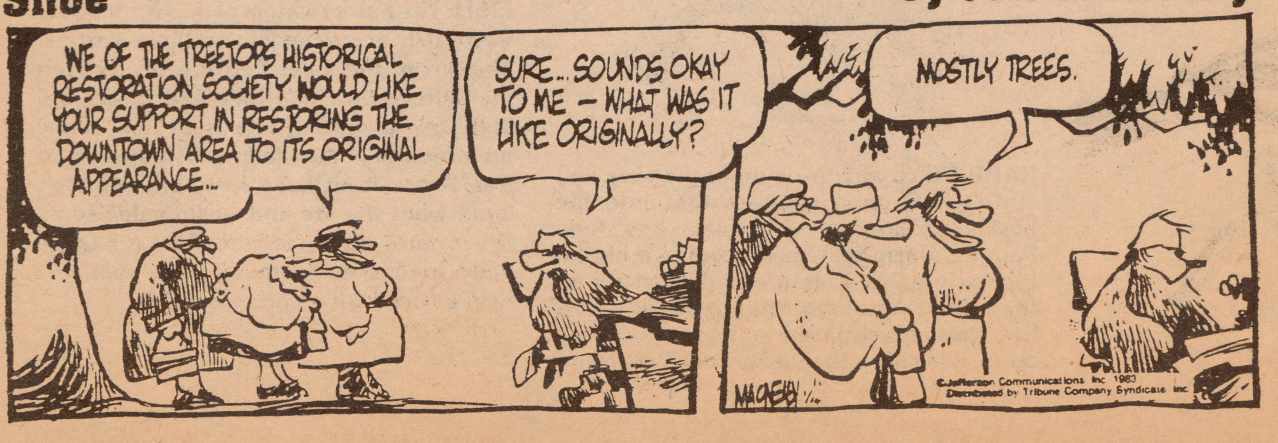
Since the demand for low interest financing should exceed the availability of program funds, low interest loans will be awarded by the Commercial Loan Review Board on a competitive basis. The review board will screen and select proposed loan projects according to need for repairs on the building and overall impact potential of the loan project by degree of neighborhood participation. Businesses that jointly apply form the same block area will be given funding priority.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE? Commercial property owners or business tenants with a gross annual sales of under one million dollars are eligible for City low interest loans. Buildings to be rehabilitated must be located in one of the five target commercial areas including: Depot Town, West Cross Street Area, Harriet Street, East Michigan Avenue Area, and West Michigan Avenue Area.

Participating lending institutuons inclued: National Bank of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Savings Bank, First Saving Association of Ypsilanti, and Michigan National Bank.

Business persons who are interested in obtaining City low interest financing should fill out a pre-application at the Ypsilanti Community Develoment Department, City Hall Building, One South Huron, Ypsilanti, Michigan. Phone: 483-1100. Department staff will assist business persons with project plans and will refer applicants to bank personnel at lending institutions participating in the program.

Shoe **by Jeff MacNelly**


WE OF THE TREETOPS HISTORICAL RESTORATION SOCIETY WOULD LIKE YOUR SUPPORT IN RESTORING THE DOWNTOWN AREA TO ITS ORIGINAL APPEARANCE...
SURE... SOUNDS OKAY TO ME — WHAT WAS IT LIKE ORIGINALLY?
MOSTLY TREES.
MACNELLY
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Happy Valentine's Day/ Birthday, DTA Caboose

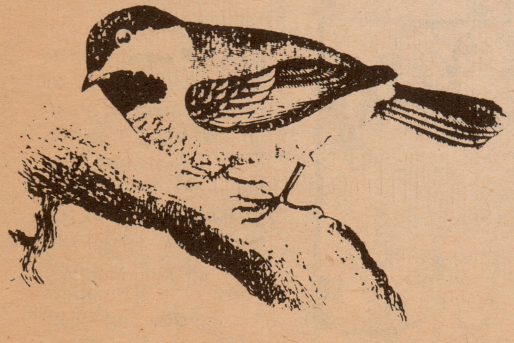
DTA will celebrate the Caboose's third year of retirement in Ypsilanti a t 6 pm, Monday, Feb. 14...in the Caboose,of course. Special guests for the event include the officers of the Campus Town Merchants Association and Central Business Community. Join them for this happy celebration.

WILD GOINGS-ON NOTED

Every neighborhood needs a wilderness. So many of us are not really city kids at all, but recently transpanted to Depot Town from the barren reaches of suburbia where ribbons of sidewalk stretch from fenced-in yard to franchise fast food land and we fall into the trap of thinking the "wilderness"is way UP North or OUT west or in the pages ofNational Geopraphic. Not so. Wild things abound in our lives, even right here in the city. The land is teeming with life, amidst concrete, railroads, vehicle traffic, electic poles and wires and occassional weird water in the river. Worst of all, perhaps is the fact that they hove to put up with humans.

Depot Town's greatest mini-wilderness, of course, is adjacent to the Huron River. Frog Island can fool a person into thinking of it as a vast emptiness, filled only intermittently by joggers, soccer players or jazz enthusiasts, but an early-morning watch will turn up a healthy population of birds, mammals and fish. Just across Forest Avenue, near rail and river is a wild tangle of growth which stretches behind Motor Wheel Corporation and alongside Highland Cemetery. This urban jungle is a delight to the eye and ear and contributes to the good health and comfort of all of us. It's no wonder we have so few pesky bugs in our block with the robust activity of the residents of these mini-jungles. We have a well balanced animal population, due to the quality of small wilderness space in and around Depot Town.

BIRDS: It's hard to ignore a flock of twenty-one MALLARD DUCKS who are already pairing up for spring. One speculates on the "extra" duck. Hmm? They cruise the Huron River year 'round now, and claim the Riverside Park to Frog Island stretch as their home base territory. KINGFISHERS share that space with CARDINALS and add their flamboyant color to the winter landscape. Remnants of BALTIMORE ORIOLES' nests are in evidence here, and CHICKADEES, JUNCOES, NUTHATCHES and WOODPECKERS are compatible neighbors,too.

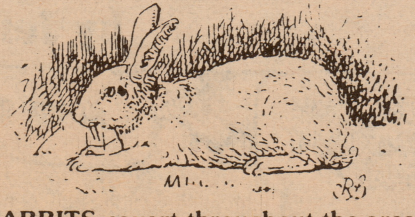


SPARROWS, certainly are the hillbillies of the block, moving in and staying friendly, fun fastidious. If Depot Town has a bird mascot, sparrows would surely be appropriate. They are so much a natural part of our life. CROWS are always in the next

field, careful not to get too close to humans, but scavenging and cleaning up when they can be alone. We've never seen the OWLS, but we know they're there from the pellets and feather balls at the base of larger trees. Bones, heads, feathers and other indigestibles are compacted into capsule-like pellets and deposited along the Frog Island dike. Could these neighbors have a nodding acquaintance with the Bald Eagle recently spotted near NM-14, a few miles north of here?

Last spring saw WHISTLER SWANS migrating north and stopping for a day or two in Depot Town. The hype of our Visitors and Convention Bureau is paying off. The word is out. Everything exotic winds up here eventually.

MAMMALS: Fat WOODCHUCKS live along the river bank and guard the bridge like the old troll watching for the Billy Goat Gruff. When the water is low, the old retaining wall on the east bank shows many caves and warrens which serve as home for the grey GROUND SQUIRRELS and the smaller friends, the frisky CHIPMUNKS.



RABBITS cavort throughout the area and RACOONS often venture right into the business district. A few years ago John Pappas' alarm system welcomed a big fat racoon into ;his sculpture studio just across the bridge. Ypsilanti Police caught it in a live trap and released it. Seems he came down the chimney and set off the alarm.

SKUNKS are in evidence, but are not often seen.These shy beauties give up a clue several times a year when thay are routed by roaming dogs, and their natural defense permeats the block and reminds up of survival and self-sufficiency.

Feral CATS inhabit this same area. Several generations ago they were domestic, but no longer. Anyone who has tried to tame one of their kittens knows how easily we can get back to nature and take care of ourselves.

Cats, skunks and woodchucks are good neighbors with each other, and with us, since they feed upon MICE and RATS. The rodent opulation is surprisingly low. County Rat Control Agents point out that most problems with rats center in the suburban areas, around the twenty-five year old projects with wooden garages, weed patches around fences, poorly kept garbage, dog pens and dirt yards. Depot Town's ancient structures are well closed up, garbage is in steel dumpsters, and the wild population balances our tiny wilderness.

Cith SQUIRRELS are shy, but playful, always just beyond intimate observation, peeking around a tree trunk, hiding behind the picnic table. They're fun-loving and happy, but only with their own. One will get smashed by a people vehicle and the others take quick note of their departed friend and then get right back to the business of being squirrels again.

FISH: The murky waters of the Huron River make fish a puzzlement to these writers. The fins of the killer CARP flash through the surface now and then and BASS are seen often. Springtime sees an active migration of some kinds of fish moving to Ann Arbor from Lake Erie, but we don't know what the are and would value some fisherman's expertise here. Who are those finny friends down there? Can someone help us out with a spring article?

Ma Bush Reincarnated At Aubree's ?

"Who is the lady? The big one, there behind the bar?" "I don't know her name, but she's always there, either behind the bar or in the kitchen."
"She must be the owner, Is that the 'Marilyn' named in the oil painting over the dart boards? The one that says 'Marilyn's Place'?"
"Must be. But don't Sandee and Bill French own this place?"
"Then who's Marilyn? She's been running this place for years." ---Sound familiar? It should. The woman in question is Marilyn Ames, Sandee and Bill's right-hand person. She's worked at AUBREE'S SALOON/ALIBI BAR for over ten faithful years, doing everything from tending bar to cooking that famous chili (Marilyn's Famous Chili) and running up high scores on Space invaders. (Marilyn welcomes all who dare to challenge.)

Marilyn Ames certainly is senior staff member at AUBREE'S SALOON and when asked how she likes working with all those "youngsters", she replies, "Hey, I'm the youngest one of all."

Although Marilyn is a recent grandmother, both her daughters grew up in Depot Town, while helping Ma with chores at the bar. They went West to sleep after closing, but their waking hours belonged to Depot Town. Last year saw a spectacular birthday party for Marilyn, one of the keystones in our neighborhod watch program. Marilny Ames is truly a cornerstone for the whole block. Now it's time to celebrate her decade of service. Congratulations, Marilyn: your regularity and visibility are models to all of us. Set 'em up.

THERE'S GOLD IN THAT THERE BLOCK

Ever get lucky and find an old coin or dollar bill and wonder what it's worth? You don't have to wonder anymore. OLDE TOWNE COIN AND GOLD has been in Depot Town for about one and a half years offering free appraisals and advice on any kind of precious metal. They also buy and sell new and used rings, watches, coins and supplies, necklaces, proof sets, mint sets, silverware, coinbooks and foreign coins. For free, friendly advice, stop in and see Depot Town's OLDE TOWNE COIN AND GOLD.

Home Town Soda Jerk Makes Good

The neighborhood grocery is back...and it's an old time Ma and Pa store with son and wife and grandkids working at the counter. Wood floors and ceiling fans, bulk products and intimate courtesy and assistance are the hallmarks of the HEALTH EMPORIUM. Although ritzy Ann Arborites might call the HEALTH EMOORIUM a "health food" store, this successful business boasts an impressive inventory any major supermarket would be proud of. Ray Packer's EMPORIUM is a great example of old-time ethics in today's business world.

Ray worked at WEBER DRUGS (now BELL'S PIZZA) soda fountain when he was in the ninth and tenth grade in ;high school andis just one more Ypsi kid who stayed with his old neighborhood and contiuned the time-honored traditions that are still proving to be good business practice. Wife Carol, son Robert and daughte-in-law Marsha have all become certified experts in herbs, spices, vitamins, cosmetics, herbal teas, grains and such. What they don't know can be quickly researched in their fine library of books and pamphlets in their shop. Watch for the usual milk and eggs and other staple grocery commodities, but don't be surprised when you come across top quality purified water, Hagen Daz Ice Cream and other exotic items not found in the usual corporate grocery. Ray has been in the health and nutrition field for more than twenty-five years, selling pharmaceuticals and equipment to doctors and hospitals and now shared his talents with the rest of us on East Cross Street.

A DEPOT TOWN RAG

by Polot and Dodd

When plastic living's got you down
Come down to our side of town
Everybody's coming back
Between the River and the Railroad track.

Sing a Depot Town refrain
Wave at every passing train
Shop for antiques in the block
Get your old car out of hock.

CHORUS:
Look at all the people
Gathered 'round the depot
The good old days are here again
Down in Depot Town

After decades of decay
Real renewal's here to stay
These city kids are sure not hicks
They're bound to save that pile of bricks.

Dance and dress just like a gypsy
In this charming part of Ypsi
Hang out at the old caboose
The whole darn district's on the loose.

CHORUS

Come by bike or bus or car
You won't have to travel far
Near the Market you can park
See Frog Island after dark.

Bring a paintbrush, saw or hammer
"Preservation", we all yammer
We are not a bunch of fools
This neighborhood is good with tools.

CHORUS

The Alibi and Sidetrack too
They'll do anything for you
Old Town diners all agree
Finer food you'll never see.

This renaissance Detroit can't enter
Of local history, we're the center
Once as hated as Willow Run
Won't you join in on the fun ?

DEPOT TOWN RAG-THE SONG

When Dodd and Polot cooperated to pen this song about our block four years ago, folks found it hard to convince Dodd that they did not want o to hear it sung on every possible occasion. Whenever a group would form, he would watch for a pause in the activity and take over with his badly sung verse. "I've had a lot of requests" says our local version of Tom Lehrer, "but I'm going to sing it anyway." Whether in the Ypsilanti Players' "Foundations", on top of the tables at Woodruff's Grove or under the tables at Aubrees, this irrepressable politician is always ready to belt it out--all eight verses of it--to anyone even remotely polite enough to listen to his little ditty about this old neighborhood. Chamber of Commerce boss, G. Merrit Martin, describes it as draping ourselves in the flag. Rich Baird calls it showing off. Nat Edmunds said it was bad taste. Dodd sings it anyway. Loud and long. All eight verses. Every chance he gets.

But what about Polot, the more accomplioshed of the collaborators? Who is this guy and why doesn't Dodd share the spot light? THE RAG thinks it'd high time to share some of the glory and push Dodd quietly into the background for a while. Let us focus, for a moment, upon the real musician of the team: Barton Polot. Bart wrote the music for "The Depot Town Rag" and recorded it and has trained others in the Rag-style so necessary to its charm and delivery.

Bart and Tom first collaborated at Ann Arbor's Community High Scool where they were team teachers in the Fime Arts Repertory Company and tegether penned the musical comedy about Thomas Alva Edison:"A Power Play" He presented that piece down here at the Eagles Hall when the Michigan Artrain last visited.

Bart, too, is a railfan, being that classy pianist at the MCRR depot in Ann Arbor, popularly known as THE GANDY DANCER. Nightly clients aroud Bart's piano are among those who applaud wildly at the passing of eery train on its way to orfrom Ypsilanti's Depot Town. You can see this behavior at jazz concerts down here, too. Ypsilanti folks are more laid back and pretend they didn't notice the roaring locomotive and a mile-long string of freight. Bart's Ann Arbor friends come all apart over the arrival of a train. Bart, however, is unflappable. He can be the cool, lounge-lizard jazz keyboard artist and

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Freight House Review

Before we get too far into the New Year, I'd like to publish the winners of the Holiday Artists' Market raffle held in the Freight House, December 5, 1982.
GRAND PRIZE: $50 gift certificate form Betty Beck's DELI SHOPPE which is slated to open down here in the not so distant furure -- won by little Matt Krakowiak from Belleville, who is the son of Big Matt Krakowiak, one of the summer vendors at the market.
SECOND PRIZE: Hand-painted calendar, for '83 painted by Debra Jean Smith won by Rick Bailey of Ann Arbor. Both Debra and Rick were artists showing at the Holiday Artists' Market.
THIRD PRIZE: Holiday centerpiece from Hon's Flowers won by Richard DeLong, of Ypsilanti,
FOURTH PRIZE: Candle with candle holder and hand-painted note cars won by Lori Brandt, president of the West Cross Street/Campus Town Merchants Association and owner of the Art Attack.
FIFTH PRIZE: Pen and ink drawing by local artist, Tom Dodd (known to a few as Victor Victorian) won by Betty Sinclair of Ypsilanti.
....And next year we're going to do it all over again.

The Freight House was swinging January 11 to the sounds of the Jimmy Wilkins seventeen-piece orchestra, as the second in the winter Jazz Series continued. It was a smash hit and a sell-out crowd

Next in theseries: FEBRUARY 12, Roy Brooks and the ArtisticTruth plus the Eddie Burns Blues Band. Tickets are available around town and are also being sold individually. Only a limited quantity here, so don't let this happen without you.

The Home Builder' show is coming to Depot Town (shades of Cobo Hall !). This event sponsored by Fingerle-Hollister-Wood of Ypsilanti will take place in the Freight House, February 23-24, Wednesday and Thursday evening at 7 p.m. Diplays will consist of home improvement and decorating ideas, stormwindows, cabinets, fixtures and little tips and hints on how to do and what to do. Open to the public.

If you are interested in renting the Freight House for events, conventions fundraisers, or whatever, it is available.
Contact: Nancy Cudney, Market Manager. 483-7421 - Home 483-1480 - Market

Market Hours: Wednesday and Saturday, 7:00 am - 3:00 pm.

RAG BAG

What could possibly be a duller time of the season than late January and early February?? Sloshy mud or icy roads and plumetting temperate can discourage even die-hard shoppers.. But when cabin fever strikes, as it's apt to do, I recommend a trip to Depot Town to burn off the fat. Bundle the kids in their snowsuits and galoshes, don your down parka and take a walk (or a drive) to visit any of your friendly Depot Town merchants. As possible incentives this month we are offering:
*Coat sales galore!! JACQUELINE'S BOUTIQUE at 25 E, Cross has slashed 25% from her already low prices on re-sale women's coats.
*...AND EVERYTHING NICE at 278 E, Cross is offering tremendous savings on children's re-sale winter outerwear. 35% off ALL coats, snowsuits, leggings and jackets. Plus 50% off all kids' hats! Stock up now for next winter.
*Valentines Day is February 14. For your Valentine RIVER ART WORKS, at 48 E, Cross, offers a whopping 20% price reduction off all purchases (except original art) from February 10-21.
*You might also find a valentine card or gift at WHEN IN DOUBT, 23 E. Cross, for your heart's desire.
*And don't forget HON'S FLOWERS at 46 E, Cross for a single rose...or a dozen!
*For younger valentines, ...AND EVERYTHING NICE has some darling handcrafted boy and girl dolls marked down to $12 for a savings of $5.
RAG BAG is a monthly feature of good bargains on the block. Plan your "special" for March and give your facts to Diane LaRue of ...AND EVERYTHING NICE the monthly Association meeting (3rd Thursday) and it will appear in the column. What a deal)

Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market
in historic Depot Town

THE
HEALTH EMPORIUM
To your good health — for your nutritional needs
19 E. Cross Street 485-2711

DEPOT EXCHANGE
54 E Cross St. (near tracks)
Depot Town
Ypsilanti, Mich 48197
ANTIQUES. Buy & sell
Professional Refinishing
313-482-1750

CUSTOM FRAMING
DESIGNER MATS
RIVER ARTWORKS
482-8785
PROFESSIONALS WITH:
• ALL GRAPHICS • NEEDLE CRAFT
• FRAMING OF OBJECTS
• ARCHIVAL FRAMING
GALLERY OF ORIGINAL ART
RENTAL DARKROOM & SUPPLIES
ART & CRAFTS CLASSES
50 E. CROSS YPSILANTI
IN HISTORIC DEPOT TOWN

B & D RETAIL
PLUMBING & HEATING
AIR CONDITIONING EQUIPMENT SALES AND SERVICE
• STEM REPLACEMENT & FAUCET REPAIR
• SEWER CLEANING
WATER SOFTENERS - SALES & SERVICE
VISIT OUR SHOWROOM
— VANITIES • MARBLE TOPS
OPEN MON.-FRI. 8A.M. TO 5P.M. SAT. 9A.M. TO 2P.M.
487-1510
yellow pages
13 E. CROSS • YPSILANTI
IN DEPOT TOWN, ACROSS FROM CITY BODY SHOP

Hon's
Flowers and Fancies
46 E. Cross 482-2124

Old Town
RESTAURANT
home-cooked
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Specials
in historic depot town
Ypsilanti

AN OPEN LETTER . . .

Asinvestors in Ypsilanlti, we are very concerned about the Historic Commission Hubbub. The protection afforded by the district is of vital importance to economic revitalization. Exempting protions of the district from the guidelines for rehabilitation would make investment here far less attractive. Even for building owners who do not choose to take advantage of the outstanding tax advantages, the work of the commission helps protect investments in property improvements. It makes the area attractive to ourside investors.

It has been demonstrated in dozens of other cities that a well rehabilitated historic district, combined with good planning and management, makes an excellent basis for economic revitalization. Recognizing this, the number of Michigan cities adopting historic ordinances has doubled every two years from nine in 1977 to 43 in 1983. Nationally, a few cities have even determined that 100% compliance with design goals was so important that they enforced it with fines. Court decisions have upheld this as equivalent to enforcing zoning ordinances and building codes.

We, along with our neighbors, are finding very positive tenant and shopper response to the historic atmosphere we are recreating in our area. We are also getting interest from other investors to join us. It would b a serious setback to have the Historic District fragmented. We are convinced this would bring about a decline in property values and we don't think anyone wants that.

The National Development Council in Washington has helped dozens of U.S. cities carry out a total ofd $5 billion in redevelopment projects since 1971. They state that a mandatoru design standard is one of four absolute essentials for the revitalization of an "Old Business District"
mandatory

Short of rebuilding Ypsilanti from scratch, the only design standard practical here is the historical one In reality, Ypsilanti is a treasure house of historic potential. The entire city could be a historic backdrop for a revitalized business district which could then compete with the shopping centers. It would get lots of attention. It certainly could be moch more interesting and attractive than some of those tacky new malls.

In the Ypsilanti Heritage Newsletter, *Councilcmember Charles Kettles is quoted as urging citizens to shop in Ypsilanti as their duty. That is unrealistic. People shop where they find an attractive atmosphere and the goods and services they want. The area that appeals to and satisfies them gets their business. That's the commercial reality.*

So we urge all interested parties to consider the evidence of what a well run historic program can do for our community and look for a way to make it work. Ypsilanti does not have any really attractive alternative, certainly none that can be carried out with less investment.

If we want to attract business and industry, we have to pull together and look good. Business doesn't locate in cities that lack amenities and can't get their act together. And people don't go there to shop, either.

We are betting on a beautiful, historic Ypsilanti.

Very Truly Yours,
Alexander C. Suczek
Follett House Associates

Embarrased By Water Tower, F.L.O. Suggests Remuddling: 1913

World-famous landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted hated Ypsilanti. He made the design for New Youk's Central Park, Detroit's Belle Isle and the gardens of the country's largest private estate: Biltmore. He even came to Ypsilant in 1913 and was (1) shocked at how we wasted our Huron River resources, (2) dismayed at the gaudy gardens we kept at the MCRR depot, (3) embarassed at the phallic symbolism of our landmark water tower. Olmstead recommended a pointy spire, Gothis crenelations and Hansel & Gretel-style brick-a-brac to disguise the shaft and present a more subtle Victorian exclamation for our city.

Olmstead had great respect for our tree-lined streets, however and made many suggestions for preserving them.

As is part of our heritage, we ignored the advice of experts, continued cutting down our trees, throwing things into the river, planting ostentatious gardens at the depot and defiantly maintained our heroic water tower.

Olmstead is the first remuddler of record to be repulsed by Ysilantians.

A Rag Tag List For Ragtime Repartee:

our neighborhood tabloid, THE DEPOT TOWN RAG, is named for the song written about this commercial district. (See accompanying article) Last year saw Gross, Richie and Richie capitalize and pun on the theme. Herewith follow some suggested news departments for subsequent issues of THE RAG. The editors encourage everyone in the block to contribute. Just slide it in the slot in the Caboose door.

ON THE RAG - reserved for the staff: Kornilakis, Dodd, LaRue and others who contribute with regularity.

RAG REPORT - hot news items on the block. Interviews.

RAGTIME - (with the logotype borrowed from the popular movie) A short listing of events in the coming month.

RAG BAG - commercial specials, tid bits from the district, good buys, strictly local, sometimes a little gossipy.

CHEWIN' THE RAG - biting editorial when they are called for: look for City Council reviews, bridge plan previews, folks who don't clean their sidewalks, flashin electric sign companies, aluminum siding salespeople, and tombstone advertising for plastic shopping malls.

RAG DOLL -a beauty contest in Depot Town? Well,maybe. Last year we featured hobokings Well maybe? Last year we featured hobo kings and queens.

RAGGEDY MAN - a parade of personalities. The beautiful and talented and generous people of our block. Bag ladies, bums, tramps and hoboes.

Cont'd on page 6

DOWNTOWN BOYCOTT FAILS NOBODY NOTICED

Ypsilanti's second generation hillbilly spokesperson, Cletus McCoy said, in a press conference at a township bowling alley today, that the week-long boycott of downtown Ypsilanti to protest the proposed new wave of remuddling went largely unnoticed. "You couldn't tell the difference," said McCoy, dressed in designer jeans and a National Trust emblem on his baseball cap.

"There was plenty of parking and all, but most of the stores were empty. My missus stood in front of a wig shop and handed out Heritage Calendars for a couple of hours, but most of the people took them just for the pictures. They didn't even read any of our preservationist propaganda."

McCoy's supporters spent most of their time in Larrys Bar and has dinners during the week at Haab's, Woodruff's Grove the Spaghetti Bender, Karonias Palace, the Wolverine, and the King Crab. "Why," said Mrs Melody McCoy, "would anybody want to change these lovely old buildings? We think they're just swell, and have been coming down here since the war." The McCoys moved to Ypsilanti as children, when their families came from Tennessee to work in the Willow Run Bomber Plant. "We financed our new furniture years ago at Mack and Mack, mostly I suppose because we couldn't find the banks. Banks should have big pillars in front and look all safe and secure-like. How come Ypsi ain't got no banks like that?"

The McCoy children, Cletus Junior, Joe Bob, Billy Boband Charmaine Bob, were all born at Beyer Hospital. They drive American-made pick-up trucks, all purchased in Ypsilanti and covered with bumper stickers proclaiming their patriotism. They have attended virtually all of the area schools at one time or another.

Billy Joe Festus, a member of the boycott group, complained, "Why, we'd rather shop in Ypsi than K-Martz. At least part of downtown is outdoors."

The protestors dispersed peacefully when police officers began checking registrations on the all-terrain vehicles parked on Michigan Avenue. "We'll be back," shouted McCoy's band of concerned preservationists as they drove off. "Just don't mess it all up so's we don't recognize dowtown no more. We're just plain folk and we like to get used to plain things. Ypsi's O.K. just the way it is. Don't slick it up no more for us. You're just wasting money."

Meanwhile, principals from the Central Business Community formed a phalanx of locked arms in the Smith Furniture Store parking lot and planned to form a pincer movement with a like group in the large parking areas behind Congdon's Ace Hardware. Chamber of Commerce officials directed the movements by two-way radio from the roof of Mellencamp's. When the hillbilly preservationists left the central business district, the two groups were called together on the Washington Street Mall where they continued plans for their Valentine Day promotions. It was the largest attendance in recent weeks.

ADS OLD AND UGLY

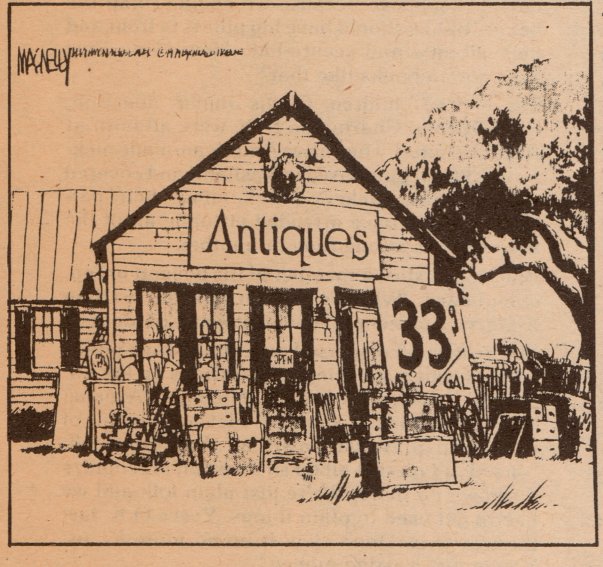
Even with last month's new look, theads were left over from last season's publications. Some of the layouts are even two years old. We're so thankful for the support of our businesses (they pay for virtually all our publication costs) theat DTa DTA
president McKeever has volunteered her professional talents to clean up the ad copy and give them a bright, new image. Thanks Carolyn. Thank you, loyal and local advertisers. And thanks, especially, to our dedicated clientele who make it all possible.

RAGS, COME HOME...
A dog-drawing contest for kids of all ages.

We're looking for a mascot: a dog we'll call RAGS. A real mutt. Nothing fancy, but a drawing of a raggedy, loveable, tail-wagger of a pooch. Rags, of course, should have a collar complete with license, doesn't run around unleashed and is taken for daily walks by its family. Rags is friendly, loyal, takes care of the place while the peole are out and wiggles all over when they return. Rags must be compatible with neighbors like Patches Shankwiler, Gus McCrakken, Stubby and Bogie McKeever, and Big Ben Ayres.

Black and white drawings would be ideal, since those colors reproduce clean and crisp. This pup should be so cute that it becomes Depot Town's version of E.T. Comic books dogs may start the search, but copyright laws demand that OUR dog be completely original. Put your dog drawings in the caboose door with your name and address on the back. We'll print the pictures here and let our readers decide in the following month.

"Here, Rags, Here Rags, Come on boy! What a good dog. Good Boy!"



RAG TAG

con't from page 5

Was there ever a Raggedy Woman? What Boxcar Bertha?

RAGGIN' IT - repeated editorials which get crankier each time aired. Peevish in print.

RAGS TO RICHES - local success stories. Help us to write about you.

Rags - the paper's comic-style mascot. A journalistic dog-days logo. See accompanying announcement of the dog-drawing contest for all ages.

RAG-A-MUFFINS - those neighborhood kids, elbow-deep in art media at the caboose, watching the puppet show on thefarm wagon, fishing from the bridge, doing wheelies in the parking lot, making chalk drawings on the sidewalks.

RAGOUT (rag-oo) - a now-and-again foods column featuring Farmers' Market nutritional information, tradeable recipes, other food items.

100% FREE RAG CONTENT - just another way of letting our readers know that this newsletter is intensly local and loyal...and it's all free, since it's paid for entirely by our local merchants.

YPSILANTI FARMERS' MARKET

Since its opening in August, 1979, the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market has proven that the traditions of quality and service are still appreciated in today's world. Independent procucers from around southeastern Michigan saw the Ypsilanti market as a great place to showcase their independence, free from corporate control and a place where they could be personally involved with shoppers who seek quality food stuffs within walking distance from their homes. The original Michigan State University promoters were both impressed and dismayed with the number of abandoned shopping carts found throughout Ypsilanti, often more than three miles from the township corporate food company's local outlets.

Smart Ypsilant shoppers quickly recognized the difference in quality of produce and service. These are the actual farmers who raise the goods. In off season the Copenhagon family buys at Detroit's Eastern Market -- right along side the big food corporations, who handle the produce up to thirteen times before it reaches local shelves. That many middle-men raise the price and lower the quality, through repeated handling, packing, shipping, trucking, loading and unloading. Wise shoppers have only to compare once to know that small, direct business delivers the same product in better condition -- and at a better price.

In November of 1981 the City finally gained access to the long-boarded-up 150 year-old railroad freight house across the tracks from the MCRR depot and the market moved indoors to become a year round operation.

At once, this historic building lent charm and atmoshpere to what had previously been simply a situation where folks could buy good produce from dependable producers. The Ypsilanti Farmers' Market quickly became the Ypsilanti community center, where one could enjoy the amenities of pot-bellied stoves, folk music and community sharing. Coffee, tea and fancy baked goods were available in the new coffee shop (now called TAKE FIVE) and soon to be open daily.

Up to 1500 people shop here weekly and enjoy the great feeling of peersonal service, quality merchandise and an identity with their community. Good buys this time of year include, Mushrooms, onions, tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, nuts and peppers.

Another of the unique features of the Market is the service provided by the experts who exhibit there: nutritionists and gourmands are constantly on hand to answer questions regarding canning, freezing and meal planning. The Food Co-op often holds demonstrations and food preparation sessions in the midst of busy Saturday shoppers.

Recent special features at the Market have included: Fresh bread, cheese, arts and crafts, stuffed dolls, woodworking and vital information on nutrition and good health.

Parking is a breeze, with space for more than 200 vehicles along the rail sidings between Cross and Forest. Bring your papers and glass and drop them at the Recycling Center on the way in --- and take first rate produce with you on the way out.

Market Hours: Wednesday and Saturday 8.00am to 2:00 pm.

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MERCHANTS' ELECT OFFICERS

Rex Richie, a principal of MILLER'S ICE CREAM SHOP, was elected chair of the Depot Town Merchants' Committee at its January meeting. Former chair, Paul Fetters of RIVER ART WORKS, will act as secretary to the group and Jim Weston, PHANTOM OF THE ATTIC, is treasurer. Rex, Paul and Jim remind us that this subdivision of the Depot Town Association meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 in the Caboose. They're the one who brought us the Kids Art program, Boomer Days, the Halloween parties for kids, and area-wide advertising campaigns.

Membership is open to business managers, owners and employees, as well as anyone else interested in the business climate in Depot Town --at ten dollar annual dues --to und current projects.
to fund

Recent discussions among Depot Town Merchants include:

* Bluegrass concerts for Boomer Days, co-sponsored by an AM radio station.
* Formation of operational by-laws for merchants
* Promotional brochure and literature
* Representation on the Ypsilanti Public Schools' Substance Abuse Committee
* Alternate traffic plans and signage for bridge replacement time
* More district advertising, billboards, television, radio
* Consolidation of business services in such areas as -trash pick-up -electrical and plulmbing contracting -snow removal and ice control -Tax credit information - restaurant supplies -district advertising and promotion

Politics Is Our Game

Trilled as we were that Mayor Peter Murdock is a lon-time member of our Association, last month brought even more results: Past DTA president Tom Dodd was wlected Mayor Pro Tem and current DTA president Carolyn McKeever was elected byCity Council to fill the Ward Five seat vacated by Murdock when he became Mayor. The spring elections see may East Siders interested in Council seats. Jerry Bubenhofer and Rodney Benmnett are running against Tom Moors for the two-year seat and Jim Cudney and Greg Dodd are running for the one-year opening. Council member David Kircher may live in another Ward, but many consider him a Depot Towner too, since they pay him rent for the largest building in the block. Of the regular Depot Towners on the East Side slated, all are known to be cooperators with the best interests of the entire community at heart. Not a mean race, this one. Perhaps we can get the competitive complainers to drop out ... and just let the Depot Town ethic run the City for a few vears

Depot Town Rag

continued from page 3

carry on a decent conversation without interrupting his continuous flow of sophisticated music.

"Take the A Train", "Sentimental Journey" and "Chatanooga Choo Choo" probably are not his favorite numbers, but he'll do them upon request.

Dodd, of course, could not let such good naturedness go unexploited and bullied poor Bart about so badly that he finally agreed to put this hometown boosterism to a tune. "Something traditional and old-fashioned. Something akin to a Scott Joplin theme. Maybe a happy, optimistic theme. All eight verses...and with a chorus, of course. Can you have it tomorrow morning?"

Risking the loss of a creative partnership, Polot labored into the night and came up with this ragtime melody--a tune so delightfully straightforward and rememberable that folks hearing it the first time can easily tap toes to it and by the second verse have mastered the chorus. It is interesting, that Dodd still needs a crib sheet to get through the second verse, while Polot never falters for the right key, tempo or style.

Bart is now completing a PhD in Music at the University of Michigan and has put his hand to the publishing of several text books for the teaching of jazz at the secondary public school level. He juries school musical contests around the country and holds forth so ably at the GANDY DANCER. He is a most talented and professional musician, one more person who brings his talents to Depot Town and its projects.

Some who are new to the lbock night just want to bone up on the lyrics... and request the "Depot Town Rat" nexttime they're putting on the dog in Ann Arbor town:

Tax Booklet Available

A book entitled TAX GUIDE FOR SMALL BUSINESS is available through the Chamber's Small Business Council. The book, published by the Internal Revenue Service, contains information about the federal tax laws that apply to business organization (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, and Subchapter S corporation) and explains the tax responsibilities of each. For more information or to obtain your free copy, contact Jennifer Rice at the Chamber of Commerce.

New Format Hard To Swallow?

January's RAG elicited much comment on our block: nice type, severely local, high energy, etc., but we DID NOT intend for the "Chewin' The Same Old Rag" headline to encourage folks to actually digest this neighborhood newsletter. This sheet is definitely not edible. It's old-fashioned newsprint, just like the YPSILANT PRESS, THE ANN ARBOR NEWS and THE ANN ARBOR OBSERVER. Do not eat it. Just read it -- and pass it on to your neightors. When everyone finishes, it burns well, is biodegradable... and it may fit the bottom of your birdcage. But ... don't eat it"

and everything nice

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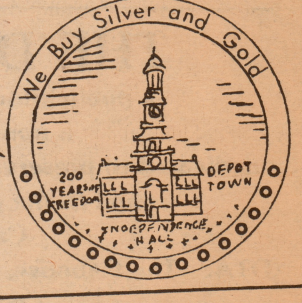

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Roy Brooks

Roy Brooks has drummed for some of the greatest--Horace Silver, Yusef Lateef, Pharoah Sander, James Moody, Wes Montgomery Sonny Stitt, Jackie McLean, Dexter Gordon, Dollar Brand and Charles Mingus included. Detroit is very lucky to have this world class artist at the Depot Town Jazz Series. Brooks leads a sextet of uncommonly original Detroit Players and composers, including trumpeter Rayse Biggs, saxophonist Vincent Bowens and bassist Don Mayberry. This is an explosive, state of the art band that lovers of the arts should not miss.

Motor City blues is among the world's best and Eddie Burns is one of the scene's veterans and mainstays. The bassist/singer/bandleader is a smokin, rocking fireplug of a bluesman. Add tenor sax, guitars, bass and drums and the result is some irresistibly danceable pure blue dynamite.

Next month: March 12

TRINIDAD TRIPOLI STEEL BAND
in their triumphal return to Depot Town

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FREEBIE: Electric stove needs work on oven, 482-6371.

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THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

a publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc.
a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation
dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood
and to the enhancement of its business climate
Carolyn McKeever, president
(DTA: The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197)
Annual Dues: Regular membership $25.00

MEETING TIMES:

The Association
Third Thursday

The Merchants
Second Thursday

The Foundation
Fourth Thursday

All at 7:30 pm
All in the Caboose

Please send more information on the Depot Town Association to:

Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Phone _____

Check Interest:

— MEMBERSHIP
— JAZZ SERIES
— INSURANCE PLANS
— DEPOT TOWN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION
— DEPOT TOWN FOUNDATION
— CABOOSE RENTAL
— ADVERTISING RATES
other _____